

Arlington Redevelopment Board
November 17, 2014 Minutes
Town Hall Annex, Second Floor Conference Room, Town Hall – 7:00pm

Approved: December 15, 2014

PRESENT: Christine Scypinski, Chair, Andrew Bunnell, Mike Cayer, Andy West

ABSENT: Bruce Fitzsimmons

STAFF: Carol Kowalski

Documents Used:

Draft Master Plan and Implementation Chart, dated November 7, 2014

Official Policy Statement, Symmes Property Debt Exclusion, dated March 12, 2001

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:00pm. The Board turned to the agenda item of Master Plan Draft Review. Charles Kalauskas and Bob Radochia of the Master Plan Advisory Committee were present to discuss the Master Plan Draft.

Mr. Radochia and Mr. Kalauskas reviewed the Master Plan efforts to date.

The Board outlined the timeline of comment and survey response due dates, future meetings, and voting as it pertains to the Master Plan. Ms. Kowalski added that the Board's endorsement of the Master Plan is optional.

Ms. Kowalski commented that each working group is reviewing the draft for completeness, and accuracy. Ms. Kowalski outlined working headlines that may be used to communicate and illustrate some of the important themes of the Master Plan draft.

Ms. Scypinski asked about controversial headlines.

Mr. Kalauskas said that he was impressed by the extent that residents were participating in the feedback. He stated that he was struck by the amount of detailed responses more so than controversial headlines.

Ms. Scypinski brought up the issue of increasing density, and how people in Arlington think of increases in density. Mixed use and density are two important issues that hopefully will be clarified with the Master Plan.

Ms. Kowalski added that predictability and design guidelines could help the discussion of mixed use and density.

Mr. Cayer asked if there was data to back up the parking study.

Ms. Kowalski said that Arlington is a member of the 128 Business Council, and the results are on the website. Ms. Kowalski added that in some parts of the bylaw, Arlington requires more parking than the market wants.

Mr. Cayer said he would be interested in what matrix the neighboring towns are using. He added that he would like to communicate that the way people approach transportation and cars in Arlington has changed, and how other dense communities have changed their parking recommendations as well.

Mr. West and Ms. Scypinski agreed that they were looking for what other communities have done to change their parking requirements.

Mr. Cayer commented on the use of the term 'density', as most people think density means a lot of parking.

Ms. Scypinski commented that the mixed use section is buried in the Open Space section of the draft. The Board agreed that the Mill Brook District should be in a different category as well.

Mr. Kalauskas made reference to the 1926 Master Plan, which the MPAC used as a reference. He mentioned that the Committee wants to challenge the consultant to think about the future of transportation, such as Uber and Lyft. It seemed like this forward thinking was in the 1926 Master Plan as well, there seemed to be road planning for a Town that had yet to start using cars. If something similar could be applied to this Master Plan it would address those issues of parking, density and transportation. He stated that they should be looking ahead thirty years.

Ms. Scypinski asked what other concerns the Board would hear from residents at the hearing.

Ms. Kalauskas said housing and affordability is a major concern for people renting. Mixed use may come into play at that point due to the affordability. He also brought up public facilities, and if the Town needs to own all the facilities that they own, and if they are maintaining them efficiently.

Ms. Scypinski asked if the consultants had a recommendation on the issue of the cemeteries. Ms. Kowalski replied not at this time.

Mr. Radochia mentioned that he has heard a lot of feedback from seniors who feel that they are being short changed with facilities, or a place to meet. He mentioned this should be addressed in the Master Plan as well.

The Board turned to the agenda item of Arlington 360, and the Neighborhood Protection Plan Fines.

Ms. Kowalski said NPP made a provision for fines to be collected when there were violations of the plan. There is \$26,250.00 in the account and it is the Board's obligation to distribute the funds. The 2001 official policy statement of the Town on the Symmes Debt exclusion mentions protecting onsite open space. Ms. Kowalski recommended devoting a portion of these funds to the Symmes Stewardship Fund, which is described in the management plan for Symmes. It provides for maintaining and monitoring the conservation easement. The funds could also go towards affordable housing because that was also an objective of the Symmes Urban Renewal Project.

Ms. Scypinski brought up that there are some outstanding issues with the developer and how to address the issues.

Ms. Kowalski explained the status of the punch list items at Symmes, since abutters brought up issues that were related to punch list items.

Ms. Cayer asked what alternatives there were for affordable housing.

Ms. Kowalski replied Housing Corporation of Arlington, and the Housing Authority.

Mr. West asked when the funds need to be allocated. Ms. Scypinski replied there is no deadline, but there is no reason to hold the funds.

Mr. Cayer proposed splitting the funds between two recipients.

The Board decided that they would wait to make a decision on distributing the funds. Ms. Kowalski agreed to provide more information on the corporations producing the most affordable housing units.

The Board then turned to the approval of the meeting minutes from November 3, 2014.

Mr. Cayer moved to approve the minutes as amended. All voted in favor.

Mr. Cayer moved to adjourn. All voted in favor.